

## Don't get nailed by an unscrupulous or unlicensed contractor.

*Before you hire a contractor or sign a contract for home repair, call the Contractors State License Board at 1-800-321-CSLB (2752).*

### General advice

■ **Don't** be a victim. **Do** be aware that consumers have been targeted by scam artists posing as contractors.

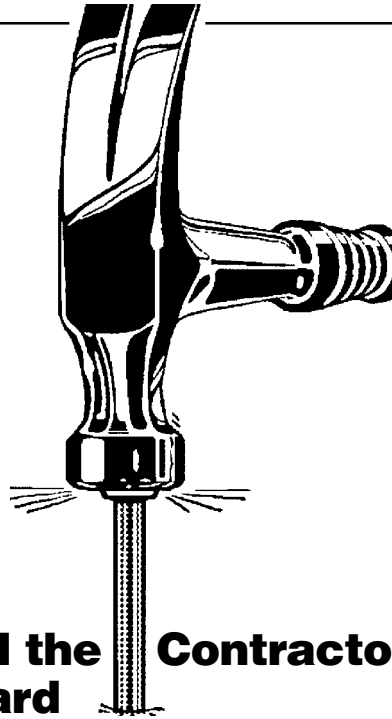
■ **Do** deal only with licensed contractors.

■ **Don't** rush into the repairs, no matter how badly they are needed.

■ **Don't** hire the first contractor who comes along.

■ **Do** ask to see the contractor's "pocket license" or Home Improvement Sales Registration.

All contractors are issued pocket licenses that show the type of trade for which they are licensed and the expiration date of the license. Ask to see some additional form of identification so you know with whom you are dealing.



### Call the Contractors Board

■ **Do** call the Contractors State License Board to verify the information provided by the bidding contractor at 1-800-321-CSLB (2752), or log onto the Internet at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov). Be prepared with the contractor's name, license number and business address.

■ **Do** get at least three bids and ask for references of work the contractor has completed in the local area.

■ **Do** request *What You Should Know Before You Hire a Contractor*, a publication to help you make informed decisions when dealing with contractors. Order by calling 1-800-321-CSLB (2752), or download an order form on the Internet at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov).

### Financial information

■ **Don't** pay cash.

■ **Don't** let the payments get ahead of the work completed, and don't pay the full cost of the job up-front.

■ **Do** know how much to give as a deposit.

Under state law, when undertaking a home improvement or repair job, contractors cannot ask for a deposit of more than 10% of the total cost of the job or \$1000, whichever is less—unless the contractor provides a bond, approved bond equivalent, or approved joint control ensuring completion of your contract. Any such bond is in addition to the bond required of all contractors for licensure.

■ **Do** require a written contract and **don't** sign it until you fully understand the terms.

*Before you sign a contract;*

*Before you pay for repairs;*

*Call the Contractors State License Board toll-free:*

**1-800-321-CSLB**

*or log onto the Internet at:*

**[www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov)**



*Upon request, the Contractors State License Board provides information about a contractor's license, bond status, and workers' compensation as well as pending and prior legal actions.*

#### ■ License Status

If you want information about a contractor's license status, please call the Board's toll-free telephone number, 1-800-321-CSLB (2752), or log onto the Internet at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov).

#### ■ Legal Action History

If you want information about a contractor's license history and pending or prior legal actions, please call the appropriate Region Office's Legal Action Disclosure phone number:

Northern Region (916) 255-4041

Southern Region (714) 994-7450

#### ■ Complaint Forms

If you have a complaint against a contractor, call the Board at 1-800-321-CSLB (2752) and ask for a copy of "A Consumer Guide to Filing Construction Complaints" and the complaint form.

**CSLB can tell if your contractor is licensed, in good standing, and in the proper classification to fit your needs.**



You can do more to protect yourself before hiring a contractor than the Contractors State License Board can do to help after you've been harmed. Call or check our Web site now for valuable information on selecting a contractor.

***The Contractors State License Board has offices throughout California. For the phone number and address of the office nearest you, call the Board's toll-free automated information number:***

**1-800-321-CSLB**  
*or log onto the Internet at:*  
**[www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov)**

**P.O. Box 26000, Sacramento, CA 95826**

**Do's & Don'ts for California Consumers**

***What You Should Know***

**BEFORE  
YOU HIRE A  
CONTRACTOR**

